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## **NNSA Official Lays Out the Future of the Nuclear Weapons Complex**

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- The future of the nation's nuclear weapons complex was described in a congressional hearing today by Tom D'Agostino, National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) deputy administrator for defense programs. D'Agostino, who testified before the House Armed Services Committee Subcommittee on Strategic Forces, outlined a plan to establish a smaller, more efficient nuclear weapons complex able to respond to future challenges.

"By 2030, the vision I set forth is of a world where a smaller, safer, more secure stockpile, with assured reliability over the long term, is backed by an industrial and design capability to respond to changing technical, geopolitical or military needs. It offers the best hope of achieving the President's vision of the smallest stockpile consistent with our national security needs," said D'Agostino.

In 2004, President Bush directed that the size of the nuclear weapons stockpile be reduced by nearly 50 percent by 2012. At that point the stockpile will be the smallest it has been since the Eisenhower administration.

The principal elements of "Complex 2030" proposed by D'Agostino include:

- Continuing to work on a reliable replacement warhead to ensure the long-term reliability and safety of the nuclear weapons stockpile and enable a more responsive supporting infrastructure while reducing the possibility that the United States would ever need to return to underground nuclear testing;
- Significantly increasing dismantlement of retired warheads that are no longer part of the stockpile;
- Increasing security and reducing security costs by consolidating special nuclear materials used in nuclear weapons to fewer sites in the complex and fewer locations within the sites;
- Establishing a consolidated plutonium center for research, development, production and surveillance operations, in lieu of construction of a modern pit facility as proposed previously by NNSA; and
- Introducing more uniformity in technical and business practices and more effective risk management to achieve more efficient operations.

D'Agostino noted that consolidating nuclear materials and eliminating duplicative capabilities at the nuclear weapons complex sites would allow NNSA to further reduce the "footprint" – the total square footage set aside for weapons work at eight sites around the country. To date, the size of the weapons complex has decreased by more than 40 percent since the end of the Cold War.

“We recognize that ‘business as usual’ is not sustainable, will not be successful, and cannot be the path we choose,” D’Agostino said. “Our Complex 2030 vision represents a significant departure from the current strategy.”

D’Agostino said NNSA significantly benefited from the work of the Secretary of Energy’s Advisory Board Task Force on the Nuclear Weapons Complex Infrastructure, and that many of the recommendations that the task force outlined were already underway or incorporated into NNSA’s existing plans.

Established by Congress in 2000, NNSA is a semi-autonomous agency within the U.S. Department of Energy responsible for enhancing national security through the military application of nuclear science. NNSA maintains and enhances the safety, security, reliability and performance of the U.S. nuclear weapons stockpile without nuclear testing; works to reduce global danger from weapons of mass destruction; provides the U.S. Navy with safe and effective nuclear propulsion; and responds to nuclear and radiological emergencies in the U.S. and abroad.

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